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course of two or three generations, and if we do not have the men, it is because we do not select and train them. It is equally our fault if such men are not placed in charge of the scientific work of the government.

THE NEW YORK MEETING OF
THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION
FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF
SCIENCE

THE first of the greater convocation-week meetings of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and its affiliated societies will be held in New York City during the last week of the present month. It has been arranged that there will be held hereafter once in four years successively in New York, Chicago and Washington, meetings at which it is planned to bring together all the national scientific societies and, so far as possible, all the scientific men of the country. There will meet in New York, counting the sections of the association, more than fifty separate organizations devoted to the advancement of science, and there has not been in the history of the world a meeting of this magnitude. When the association last met in New York City ten years ago there were about five thousand members, the attendance was over two thousand, and there were nearly a thousand papers on the program. The present membership of the association numbers about eleven thousand, and the number and size of the affiliated societies has increased in proportion.

The opening session, presided over by Dr. Charles R. Van Hise, of the University of Wisconsin, will be held at the American Museum of Natural History on the evening of December 26, at which time the address of the retiring president, Dr. W. W. Campbell, director of the Lick Observatory, on "The Nebulæ" will be delivered. The registration headquarters will be at Columbia University, and most of the meetings of the sections and of the sci-

entific societies will be held there, though there will be meetings in a number of the educational and scientific institutions of the city.

Each of the separate societies and sections is arranging sessions of interest and importance, and, as the program to be issued at the time of the meeting will doubtless fill more than a hundred pages, it is difficult to select any part for special mention. There is to be a scientific exhibit and conversazione at Columbia University, which is being organized under the charge of some fifteen different committees. There will also be a special chemical exhibit and conversazione at the American Museum of Natural History. It is expected that a joint meeting of physicists and chemists will be held at the City College with a discussion on "The Structure of the Atom and the Constitution of Matter." The four great national engineering societies, which have their headquarters in New York City, plan to hold a special meeting and a reception afterwards to those engaged in work relating to engineering. The Committee of One Hundred on Scientific Research will consider a number of important reports. The American Society of Naturalists will hold a symposium on "Biology and National Existence." Public lectures will be given by Dr. Simon Flexner, director of the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research, and by Professor A. A. Noyes, of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and chairman of the committee of the government on the supply of nitrogen.

These are only a few of the events which will make the meeting of interest quite unparalleled. It is certain that men of science will make special efforts to be present, not only for the interest and profit that they will find in the meeting, but also to contribute their share to the organization of science in the United States, and to impress on the general public the dominant place that science holds in modern civilization.

The meeting will not only be important to those concerned with research,

but also to all those who are interested in any aspect of science, and it is desirable that, following the precedent of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, there may be a large attendance of those who are not professional scientific men. The association admits to membership those who are in sympathy with its aims and who wish to assist in promoting them, even though they are not engaged in scientific work. Information concerning membership may be obtained from the Permanent Secretary, the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C.

SCIENTIFIC ITEMS

WE record with regret the death of Dr. Cleveland Abbe, the distinguished meteorologist, and of Dr. Percival Lowell, of Boston, director of the Lowell Observatory at Flagstaff, Arizona, widely known for his work and theories on the planet Mars.

A MEETING to plan a memorial to the late Sir William Ramsay was held at

University College, London, on October 31. After the meeting, the director of the University College Chemical Laboratories, Professor J. Norman Collie, F.R.S., delivered a memorial lecture on "The Scientific Work of Sir William Ramsay."

DR. WILHELM VON WALDEYER, professor of anatomy in the University of Berlin, has been raised to hereditary nobility on the occasion of his eightieth birthday.—The American Academy of Arts and Sciences on November 15 presented the Rumford medals to Mr. Charles Greeley Abbot, of the Smithsonian Institution, for his researches on solar radiation.—The degree of doctor of laws was conferred upon Thomas A. Edison over the telephone by Dr. John H. Finley, president of the University of the State of New York, at the closing session of the institution's fifty-second convocation on October 20. Mr. Edison was in his laboratory at Orange, N. J., while Dr. Finley was in the auditorium of the New York Education Building at Albany.